









KEEPING CHIP FAMILIES INFORMED

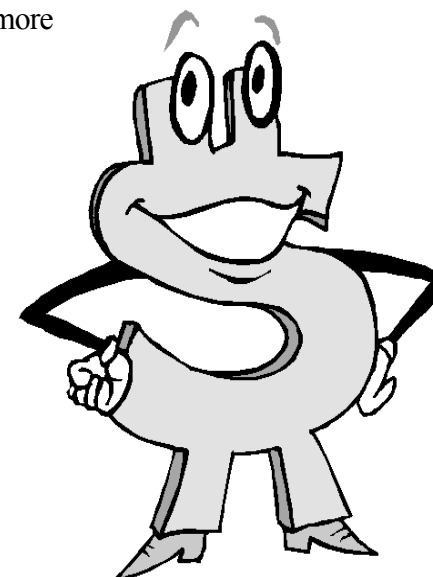
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CHIP Gets New Money

CHIP received a boost from Gov. Judy Martz at the end of October in the form of \$609,900. With these new funds and matching funds from the federal government, CHIP was able to enroll all the children on the waiting list. The funds also helped pay the cost of a higher premium the Department of Public Health and Human Services pays to Blue Cross Blue Shield of Montana each month.

New research done by the University of Montana tells us there are about 24,000 uninsured children who could be eligible for CHIP. The Department is planning to begin raising funds to help purchase insurance for those children. If you know of organizations or individuals in your area who might be able to help, call or email the CHIP office. Future issues of *CHIPChat* will have more details.



Checking the Facts

Many families have complimented CHIP on how easy it is to complete the application. Although CHIP is no longer asking for proof of income when a family applies, CHIP is randomly selecting 10% of applications and asking the families to provide proof of income. Both new and renewal applications are selected for review within two weeks of children being determined eligible for CHIP benefits.

These quality assurance reviews will provide many benefits to CHIP and the families we serve. Among those benefits are:

- ✓ insuring the family's eligibility has been determined accurately.
- ✓ providing health insurance coverage to CHIP-eligible children only.
- ✓ confirming that proof of income is not needed to assure accurate eligibility determination.
- ✓ providing CHIP feedback about the application. For example, Are questions worded clearly? Should questions be added or deleted?

What should you do if your application is chosen for review? CHIP will list the information you included on your application and ask you to supply proof of that information. You should gather the proof (e.g., pay stubs, W-2 forms, tax returns, business income and expense statements, etc.) and mail or fax the information to CHIP within the time allowed.

Throw Out Your Sick Toothbrush

With flu season in full swing, it's a good time to think about ways to stop spreading germs.



After you have been sick, get rid of your old toothbrush and get a new one. This will keep you from re-infecting yourself. Covering your mouth when sneezing and washing your hands often during the day are two other important ways to keep the flu at bay.

Smokeless Does Not Mean Harmless

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), since 1970, smokeless or spit tobacco has gone from a product used primarily by older men to one used mostly by young men and boys. Montana is one of the highest-ranking states in the country for spit tobacco use. It is estimated that one out of every four male high school students in Montana is a regular spit tobacco user.

Advertising glamorizes tobacco use but tends not to point out the health risks, including addiction. Parents and teens should know that one can of spit tobacco delivers as much nicotine as 60 cigarettes (that's the same as three packs of cigarettes). To make matters worse, manufacturers often mix sugar in the tobacco that makes it taste better but can also cause cavities. Spit tobacco also causes bad breath and brings cancer-causing chemicals in direct contact with your tongue, gums and

cheek lining. Because the early signs of oral cancer usually are not painful, people often ignore them. If it is not caught in the early stages, oral cancer can require extensive, sometimes disfiguring, surgery. Even worse, it can kill you.

If you haven't started using spit tobacco, don't! If you or your child are using spit tobacco already, think about quitting, and get some help. A good place to start is by speaking with your doctor or dentist. You can also visit the National Spit Tobacco Education Network (NSTEP) website for more information at: www.nstep.org/nstep.htm.

Information in this article was obtained from the CDC, NSTEP, National Center for Tobacco-Free Kids and the American Dental Association (ADA).



Hot Cocoa Pops A cool cocoa treat

(<http://pbskids.org/zoom/cafe/hotcocoapops.txt.shtml>)

Here's what you will need to make it:

- hot cocoa mix
- marshmallows
- 9 oz. plastic cups
- popsicle sticks
- aluminum foil

Here's what you have to do:

1. Check with a grown-up before you start.
2. Ask a grown-up to help you make some hot cocoa. You can use a mix, or you can make it from scratch.
3. Let the hot cocoa cool off. After it's cooled, pour it into a plastic cup.
4. Then, stick a marshmallow halfway up a popsicle stick. Put the popsicle stick in the cup.
5. Cover the cup with a piece of aluminum foil. Press down so the end of the popsicle stick pokes out of the foil. The foil will keep the popsicle stick in place.
6. Freeze your popsicles overnight.
7. When they're ready, wiggle the stick back and forth to get your popsicle out of the cup.
8. Enjoy this frozen cocoa treat!



Important Information



CHIP: 1-877-KIDSNow
(1-877-543-7669)
FAX: 1-877-418-4533
These are free calls.



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chip@state.mt.us

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